



## THE RIDGE



The 13,625-acre Laurel Ridge State Park stretches along Laurel Mountain from the picturesque Youghiogheny River at Ohiopyle to the Conemaugh Gorge near Johnstown. This large park spans Cambria, Fayette, Somerset and Westmoreland counties. The main feature of the park is the 70-mile Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail (LHHT). The trail traverses state parks, state forests, state game lands, other public lands and private lands, providing day-hiking and semi-wilderness backpacking experiences with overnight Adirondack-style facilities. The LHHT was a catalyst for establishment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, a network between the

mouth of the Potomac River and the Allegheny Highlands. To explore other trails in the network, visit [www.nps.gov/pohe](http://www.nps.gov/pohe).



Many people visit for the exceptional scenery. Spring wildflowers dot the forest floor in early April, followed by a vibrant green forest as leaf-out begins in late April. Mountain laurel blooms in June and rhododendron blooms in late June and early July. Visit the park in mid-October and witness fall color in all its glory. Winter is spectacular when the park is covered in a deep blanket of snow and the occasional great horned owl calls through the moon-lit forest. The cross-country ski area at Laurel Ridge provides one of the finest Nordic skiing experiences in the Mid-Atlantic region.

## CROSS-COUNTRY CODE

photo courtesy of John Weld



- Always purchase a trail pass from the concessionaire; if closed, no pass is required.
- Obey all signs and posted warnings.
- Stay on marked trails.
- Always carry and use a trail system map.
- You must remain in control and proceed in such a manner that you can stop or avoid other people or objects.
- If skiing alone, ensure that others know your whereabouts.
- In case of emergencies, please contact the concession at 724-455-7303 or call 911.
- Choose trails appropriate to your ability and fitness.
- Grooming vehicles may be on the trail – use caution.
- Give downhill skiers the right of way.
- Fill in your divots and sitz-marks.
- Help maintain the integrity of the ski tracks by not skiing over them.
- When a skier behind calls out “track,” move to the right and allow them to pass.
- When stopping, step off the trail to leave room for other skiers to pass.
- Do not block intersections and avoid stopping in the middle of hills or where you are not visible to other skiers.
- Do not walk in the set tracks or on groomed trails and keep to the right.
- Dogs are ONLY allowed on the Orange Trail and must be under control at all times. Bag and remove all waste.
- Carry in, carry out – Leave No Trace.
- Return to your vehicle by sunset. Concession building closes at 5:00 P.M., and warming hut closes at sunset.



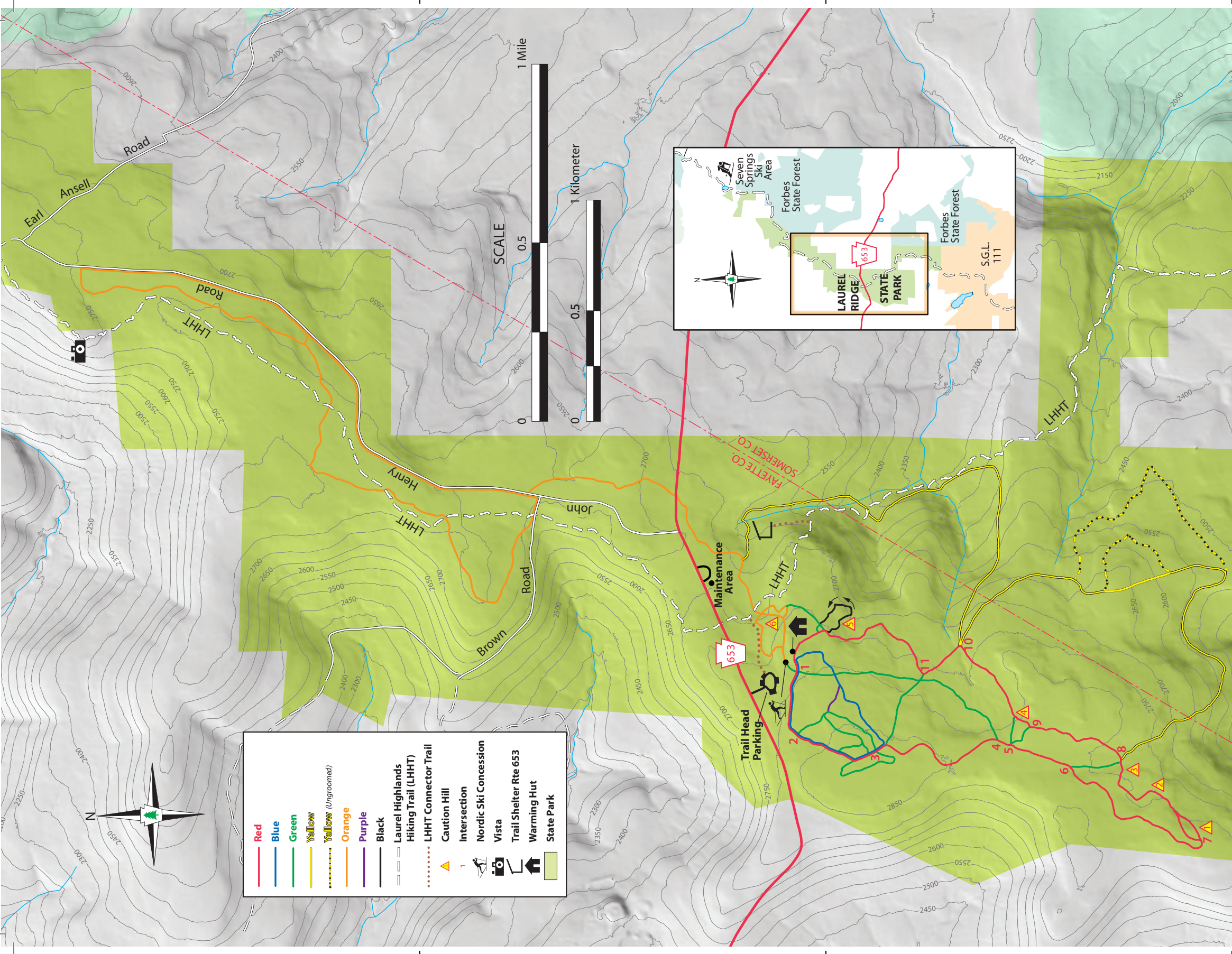
Laurel Ridge  
State Park

## Laurel Ridge State Park Cross-Country Ski Area



photo courtesy of John Weld





## CROSS-COUNTRY FUN

### Trail Descriptions

- Purple Trail:** A gentle 1.0 kilometer trail, groomed for skating and classical striding, ideal for beginners.
- Blue Trail:** A relatively easy 1.7 kilometer trail ideal for skating or classical striding.
- Red Trail:** Just over 5.0 kilometers long, the Red Trail is groomed for skating or classical striding.
- Orange Trail:** 10.6 kilometers with a cutoff to create a loop of 7.0 kilometers. This dog friendly trail is groomed for skating and classical striding. Skiers are reminded to bag and remove all pet waste.
- Green Trails:** These trails generally connect sections of the Red Trail.

- Yellow Trails:** Classical striding trails and not groomed as wide or as often as other trails. 5.3 kilometers offer a backcountry experience. Yellow Trails with blue blazes are not groomed.
- Black Trail:** This one-way, 0.4 kilometer trail is designed for advanced skiers.



photo courtesy of John Weld

### Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing

A cross-country ski touring concession adjacent to the PA 653 parking lot provides access to over 20 miles of trails. The concession grooms surfaces for classic and freestyle skiing. Trail passes, rental skis and snowshoes are available from the concession. Snowshoers are highly encouraged to explore the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail. For current trail conditions and fee information, please call 724-455-7303. The Pennsylvania Cross-Country Skier's Association (PACCSA) is a volunteer organization dedicated to the development of the sport of cross-country skiing in Pennsylvania and the tri-state region. A web cam sponsored by PACCSA also provides current trail conditions: <http://www.paccca.org/lrwebcam>.